

EMA Issues Safety Reminders as Winter Storm Moves Through Illinois

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SPRINGFIELD –The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is encouraging all Illinoisans to make safety a priority as a winter storm moves across the state. The National Weather Service (NWS) is forecasting accumulating snow for northern Illinois, while snow and ice will make travel treacherous for parts of central Illinois. To help Illinoisans prepare for winter weather, IEMA and the NWS developed a [Winter Weather Preparedness Guide](#) to help Illinois residents stay safe during winter weather.

“Being unprepared for winter weather is not only inconvenient, but it can be dangerous,” said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “We are encouraging all Illinoisans to take a few minutes to put together your home and vehicle emergency supply kits and review the steps you should take to stay safe during hazardous winter weather.”

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency maintains the [Ready Illinois](#) website which includes critical safety information to help Illinoisans before, during and after any hazard, man-made or natural.

Winter Weather Preparedness tips include:

- Familiarize yourself with the various weather alert definitions, so you know how to keep your family safe;
- Build a [home emergency kit](#) with items such as a food, water, medications, NOAA weather radio, flashlight and spare batteries;
- Stock your vehicle with the emergency items such as a first aid kit, phone charger, blankets, extra clothes, jumper cables, kitty litter or sand, a flashlight and snow scraper in the event you must travel;
- Charge your mobile devices before any storm;
- Don’t wait. Communicate. Create and discuss emergency plans for you and your family;
- Winterize your home and take steps to prevent frozen water pipes;

Ice and Snow, Take it Slow

When possible, stay off the roads during and immediately after a storm. Snowy or ice-coated roads and reduced visibility due to fog or blowing snow results in thousands of motor vehicle crashes every year in Illinois. Many of these crashes can be avoided by slowing down on city streets, rural roads and highways. Recent traffic studies have shown that many times, minor accumulations of snow or ice on roads can be just as dangerous for motorists as major snowstorms. If you must travel during a storm, check road conditions before you leave your home by visiting www.GettingAroundIllinois.com. Make sure you reduce speeds, allow extra time to reach your destination, and move over for snowplows, emergency response vehicles and disabled cars.

Home Heating Tips

Proper home heating is a critical issue during the winter months, and over time has proven deadly for many families. Every year, more than 400 people die in the U.S. from accidental carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. CO is found in fumes produced any time

you burn fuel in cars or trucks, small engines, stoves, lanterns, grills, fireplaces, gas ranges, or furnaces. CO can build up indoors and poison people and animals who breathe it.

- Never use a generator inside your home, basement or garage.
- Do not use a stove or oven as a home heating sources
- If using a space heater, keep it at least three feet away from flammable items such as curtains, blankets and sofas.
- Know the signs for carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain and confusion.

You can stay ahead of incoming winter weather by following the National Weather Service in your area: